



**August 10, 2009 For immediate release**

**PRESS CONTACTS**

Robin C. Gillette  
Executive Director  
robin@fringefestival.org  
Office (612) 872-1212  
Cell (612) 703-6168

Matthew Foster  
Communications Director  
matthew@fringefestival.org  
Office (612) 872-1212  
Cell (612) 803-1340

## **Minnesota Fringe sets new attendance record**

Performing arts festival issues over 46,000 tickets in 11 days

MINNEAPOLIS AND ST. PAUL — Minnesota Fringe Festival today announced a 13 percent increase in attendance over last year's festival, setting a new all-time attendance record for the festival. The 11-day performing arts festival closed yesterday in Minneapolis and St. Paul.

Preliminary numbers show 46,189 tickets were issued to an estimated 15,100 patrons of the 2009 festival. Gross box office revenue was over \$330,000 from 162 different productions at 22 venues in Minneapolis and St. Paul. In 2008, a total of 40,926 tickets were issued, generating \$297,374. The previous festival attendance record was set in 2006 with 44,692 tickets issued with gross box office of \$338,181.

"To say I'm thrilled is a tremendous understatement," said executive director Robin C. Gillette. "This has been a monumental year for Fringe, absolutely. I don't think there's barely a Minnesota Fringe record we didn't shatter."

Four Humors Theater's "Sideways Stories from Wayside School," presented at the University of Minnesota Rarig Center Thrust stage, set a single-performance attendance record with 402 tickets issued to its Saturday night show, a new high in Minnesota Fringe's 16-year history. (A list of the top-attended shows by number of tickets issued and by percentage of house capacity follows.)

"Although we weren't worried, we knew this year that we couldn't take anything for granted," she said. "Our participating artists brought what may be the strongest lineup to the festival ever, our volunteers and staff were tireless, and the audiences turned out like never before. The response was phenomenal."

Visits to the festival's Web site, [fringefestival.org](http://fringefestival.org), increased by 35 percent over last year. Nearly 3,200 audience reviews had been submitted to the festival's Web site as of 11 a.m. Monday, an immense increase over last year's 2,200.

"Fringe's success is a heartening sign for all Minnesota performing arts attendance this fall," said Gillette. "In many ways, Fringe is a wind-up to the next theater season. I think our festival having such an amazing year bodes well for everyone."

"In baseball terms, this was one hell of an opening pitch," she said.

Minnesota Fringe, the third oldest Fringe in the United States, celebrates its 17th year in 2010 from Thurs., Aug. 5 through Sun., Aug. 15. Applications for next year's festival will be available on Mon., Nov. 16 at [fringefestival.org](http://fringefestival.org). The festival lineup is determined by public lottery in early February.

- Continues next page -

## Top ten shows by number of tickets issued

1. *The Harty Boys in The Case of the Limping Platypus* presented by Joshua English Scrimshaw and Levi Weinhagen at U of M Rarig Center Thrust (1,067 tickets)
2. *Bard Fiction* presented by Tedious Brief Productions at U of M Rarig Center Thrust (1,046)
3. *Sideways Stories from Wayside School* presented by Four Humors Theater at U of M Rarig Center Thrust (946)
4. *Blue Ribbon Burlesque* presented by Lili's Burlesque Revue at U of M Rarig Center Proscenium (797)
5. *Tragedy of You* presented by Joseph Scrimshaw Productions at U of M Rarig Center Thrust (785)
6. *The Red Tureen* presented by Doolin & Dingle at U of M Rarig Center Thrust (756)
7. *The Return of LICK!* presented by LICK! at Southern Theater (687)
8. *The William Williams Effect* presented by Balance Theatre Project at Southern Theater (680)
9. *Buyer's Remorse* presented by Sarah Gioia and Steve Moulds at Mixed Blood Theatre (637)
10. *Tales ... Of the Expected!* presented by Ari Hoptman at U of M Rarig Center Proscenium (615)

## Top ten shows by percentage of house capacity

1. *Projectile Thinking* presented by Stages Theatre Company with Jon Ferguson at InterDistrict Downtown School (108 percent)
2. *Parry Hotter and the Half-Drunk Twins* presented by Empty S Productions at Augsburg Studio (107.5 percent)
3. *Sarah, Your Ovaries Are Drying Up: The Musical* presented by Crankador Productions at Augsburg Studio (101.5 percent)
4. *Two Short Operas: Mr. Berman's Bath-Size Bar and There's a Mastodon In My Backyard* presented by the Dead Composers Society at Playwrights' Center (100.3 percent)
5. *Harold Pinter's The Dumb Waiter* presented by Paul von Stoetzel at Playwrights' Center (99.7 percent)
6. *2 Sugars, Room for Cream* presented by Shanan Wexler and Carolyn Pool Productions at U of M Rarig Center Xperimental (96 percent)
7. *The Traveling Musicians* presented by 3 Sticks at Nomad World Pub (95.6 percent)
8. *Rumspringa the Musical* presented by Best Weird Dog at Augsburg Studio (95.1 percent)
9. *Squawk* presented by Walking Shadow Theatre Company at Gremlin Theatre (93.6 percent)
10. *June of Arc* presented by Sandbox Theatre at U of M Rarig Center Xperimental (92.6 percent)

*NOTE: All numbers are preliminary and have not yet been subject to a full audit of box office receipts.*